

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-13

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 NEAE-00 EUR-25 OMB-01 AID-20

SAJ-01 SAB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAM-01 ACDA-19 DRC-01 /174 W

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P R 140914Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1513

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 0880

BEIRUT PASS DAMASCUS

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, SY, EG

SUBJ: DAYAN REMARKS ON DISENGAGEMENT WITH SYRIA

SUMMARY: IN APPEARANCE BEFORE MILITARY CORRESPONDENTS IN
TEL AVIV FEB 12, DEFENSE MINISTER DAYAN EXPRESSED OPINION
THAT INCIDENTS ALONG SYRIAN CEASEFIRE LINE SHOULD BE EXPECTED
TO CONINUE UNTIL DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT WITH SYRIA IS
REACHED. DAYAN TERMED DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT WITH
SYRIA A PRIMARY ISRAELI GOAL. WITH RESPECT TO EGYPT, DAYAN
SAID HE THOUGHT BEST TIME FROM ISRAEL'S POINT OF VIEW TO
CONTINUE TALKS WITH EGYPT WAS AFTER REOPENING OF SUEZ CANAL.
WE FIND DAYAN'S REMARKS ON SYRIA TO BE RELATIVELY MODERATE
AND TO SUGGEST THAT ISRAEL WILL USE RESTRAINT IN WAY IT

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RESPONDS TO SYRIAN PROVOCATIONS. (THIS REINFORCES WHAT FONMIN
EBAN TOLD ME DURING MY FEB 12 MEETING WITH HIM.) END SUMMARY.

1. ARTILLERY EXCHANGES WITH SYRIA. DAYAN TOLD REPORTERS THAT INCIDENTS ALONG CEASEFIRE LINE WITH SYRIA SHOULD BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE UNTIL DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT WITH SYRIA IS REACHED. HE STATED "THEY (THE SYRIANS) DO NOT LIKE OUR PRESENCE ON THE GOLAN HEIGHTS. THE SYRIANS ARE EXTREMIST, NATIONALISTIC AND ACTIVE AND DO NOT WANT TO APPEAR WEAK. I DO NOT REGARD RECENT INCIDENTS AS MERELY EPISODIC AND I AM NOT SURPRISED AT THEIR SHOOTING. IN FACT, I WOULD BE MORE SURPRISED IF THEY DID NOT." ANSWERING QUESTION ON WHETHER IDF HAD BEEN RESTRICTED IN CARRYING OUT RETALIATORY MEASURES AGAINST SYRIA, DAYAN DENIED THAT THIS WAS THE CASE BUT NOTED THAT THERE WERE POTENTIAL POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS IN ALL RETALIATORY ACTIONS AND THAT "FIRM REPLY IN KIND IS ESSENTIAL, BUT THIS ALONE WILL NOT END THE SYRIAN ATTACKS."

2. SYRIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT. DAYAN SAID HE HOPED ISRAEL WOULD SOON ARRIVE AT AN AGREEMENT WITH SYRIA. BOTH SIDES NEEDED AND WANTED ONE. HE SAID "THIS IS A PRIMARY QUEST OF OURS-- TO PUT AN END TO THE FIGHTING IN AN HONORABLE AND ACCEPTABLE MANNER"

3. ISRAEL AND EGYPT. DAYAN SAID HE BELIEVED EGYPTIANS WERE COMPLYING WITH ALL TERMS IMPOSED ON THEM BY DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT. DAYAN ALSO SAID HE THOUGHT SADAT WAS ANXIOUS FOR SYRIANS TO START DISENGAGEMENT TALKS WITH ISRAEL AND HAD BASIC INTEREST IN SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME OF TALKS SO THAT SECOND STAGE OF GENEVA PEACE CONF COULD GET UNDERWAY. REGARDING CONTINUATION OF TALKS WITH EGYPT, DAYAN SAID, "I MAY BE TOO OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THIS, BUT I THINK THAT THE MOST OPPORTUNE MOMENT WILL COME AFTER SHIPPING OPERATIONS IN THE (SUEZ) CANAL ARE RESUMED."

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TEL AVIV 0880

4. REPORTS OF SCUD MISSILES IN EGYPT AND SYRIA. COMMENT-
ING ON THIS SUBJECT:, DAYAN SAID THIS WAS AN "ANTICIPATED
DEVELOPMENT" SINCE ARAB PILOTS WERE NO MATCH FOR ISRAEL'S
AIR FORCE IN AIR-TO-AIR COMBAT AND THEIR CHANCES OF AERIAL
INCURSIONS INTO ISRAEL WERE SMALL. THESE CONSIDERATIONS HAD
LED USSR TO PROVIDE SCUD MISSILES. DAYAN SAID THAT ARRIVAL
OF SCUDS SHOULD SERVE TO UNDERLINE IMPORTANCE OF ISRAEL'S
RELATIONSHIP WITH US, SINCE ISRAEL MUST OBTAIN MORE
SOPHISTICATED TYPES OF WEAPONS WHICH IT CANNOT AFFORD TO
DEVELOP BY ITSELF AND WHICH ISRAEL REQUIRES TO ANSWER SOVIET
ARMS DELIVERIES TO ARAB COUNTRIES.

5. CALLS FOR DAYAN'S RESIGNATION. DAYAN SAID HE HAD TWICE
OFFERED TO RESIGN DURING OCTOBER WAR BUT THAT HIS OFFER HAD
BEEN TURNED DOWN. HE THEN SAID THAT IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO
RESIGN FROM A TRANSITIONAL CABINET, BUT IF THIS HAD BEEN
POSSIBLE AND HE HAD RESIGNED, "THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN
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ASSUMING THE GUILT OF THE ARMY BEFORE THIS HAS BEEN ESTAB-
LISHED AND WHILE THE AGRANAT COMMITTEE IS STILL STUDYING
THE CONDUCT OF THE WAR." AS TO HIS FUTURE, DAYAN SAID HE
HAD NOT BEEN OFFERED DEFENSE MINISTRY IN NEW CABINET AND
WOULD NOT ACCEPT IT "UNLESS THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR MY APPOINT-
MENT ARE CONVINCED THAT I CAN DO THE JOB BETTER THAN ANYONE
ELSE."

6. COMMENT: WE FIND DAYAN'S REMARKS ON INCIDENTS ALONG
SYRIAN CEASEFIRE LINE INTERESTING BECAUSE OF THEIR MODERATION.
IT APPEARS TO US THAT HE IS SAYING ISRAEL IS NOT GOING TO BE
PANICKED INTO RASH ACTIONS AGAINST SYRIA. HIS REMARK
THAT "A FIRM REPLY IN KIND" IS NECESSARY COUNTER TO SYRIAN
PROVOCATIONS CARRIES IMPLICATION THAT ISRAEL WILL NOT ESCALATE
FIGHTING BY AIR STRIKES. HIS SOBER ASSESSMENT THAT INCIDENTS

ARE LIKELY TO CONTINUE AS LONG AS THERE IS NO DISENGAGEMENT
AGREEMENT BETWEEN ISRAEL AND SYRIA WILL PROBABLY NOT BE
WELCOMED BY THOSE WHO THINK THAT ISRAEL SHOULD RESPOND
MORE FIRMLY. FINALLY, HIS REMARK THAT BEST TIME TO CONTINUE
TALKS WITH EGYPT FROM ISRAEL'S POINT OF VIEW IS AFTER RE-
OPENING OF SUEZ CANAL IS IN LINE WITH WHAT WE HAVE HEARD
ABOUT DAYAN'S THINKING FROM OUR CONTACTS-- NAMELY, THAT HE
IS IN NO HURRY TO MOVE TO A FURTHER SETTLEMENT STAGE WITH
EGYPT FOLLOWING DISENGAGEMENT.
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